

Evening Telegraph

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WEDNESDAY, JUNE 15, 1870.

THE CUBAN QUESTION.

Public interest in the Cuban question will be materially increased by the speech delivered by General Banks, in the House of Representatives, yesterday. He takes direct issue with the administration, and as he is the big gun of the Cuban cause, Chairman of the Committee on Foreign Affairs, and an orator of no mean pretensions, it is not surprising that he created a sensation. It was perfectly natural that he should be applauded by galleries well filled with Cubans who have come here to fight their battles on our soil, and who view the possible expenditure of American blood and American money on their behalf with as much philosophic indifference as Artemus Ward displayed in regard to the fate of such of his distant relatives as were drafted for service against the Rebellion. It is always a popular thing to make speeches for liberty and independence, and declamation against tyrants sounds nearly as well in Congress as on the stump. Even if the Cubans had issued no bonds, and if our spread-eagle orators did not cherish the slightest hope of pecuniary reward from the creoles, they would still be loth to lose the opportunity for fine speech-making which this domestic convulsion affords. Ever since the Government was established similar questions have arisen, and while, to the credit of American administrations, they have refrained from active interference, there was always a hot-headed party in Congress ready and anxious to plunge the nation into inextricable difficulties. Washington laid down the true rule when he warned his countrymen against entangling alliances, and in resisting the popular pressure for a close affiliation with the French revolutionists, he discharged a sacred duty only one degree less meritorious and useful than his military services. It may be a fine thing for Congressmen eager to earn oratorical fame, or possibly something of greater pecuniary value, to become the champions of guerillas, to exalt voluntary exiles into the purest of patriots, and to urge the American people to become parties to a desperate quarrel. But the nation which is to foot the bill of all these fine experiments, and which is now slowly recovering from the exhaustion of its own bloody war, will pause long and ponder deeply before it departs from the traditional policy which has so admirably served its true interest. All Europe groans under burdens imposed by unnecessary and unwise interference in foreign wars, and the modern experience furnished by the French attempt to establish Maximilian in Mexico, and the English efforts to aid the Southern Rebellion, furnish new proofs of the folly of a departure from the strict line of international law and the established rule of our own Government. It will be time enough to grant belligerent rights to the Cuban insurgents after their title to such recognition is founded on an indisputable basis, and after the arguments and statements contained in the late special message of the President are conclusively refuted.

Presuming General Banks' own statement that the forces now in the field in Cuba consist of about 55,000 Spanish soldiers against 10,000 or 20,000 Cubans to be correct, our own late history shows how desperate must be the prospects of the insurgents under these circumstances. The best thing that can be done for all parties is, to hasten the suspension of such an unequal conflict, more especially as it has degenerated into massacre, murder, plunder and devastation, or the sort of war that Jeff. Davis might have waged for a time after the surrender of the armies of Lee and Johnston, if he had not been captured, and if he had been able to keep a few bands of guerillas in the field. It is beneath the dignity of a great government to fan the embers of such an expiring flame. It should strive rather to extinguish them in the most speedy manner possible, and display its regard for those who are implicated in an unsuccessful rebellion by efforts to secure for them the best possible terms of reconciliation.

BUTLER DESPONDENT.

We find in the Petersburg, Va., Courier of a late date a brief letter from General B. F. Butler, in which he says:—"I can only say of this matter of reconstruction, substantially in the language of Holy Writ:—'If they will not believe Moses and the Prophets, neither will they believe though one rose from the dead.' I am afraid hardness of heart and blindness of mind will possess the people both North and South, until a new calamity will come upon the nation. I wish your matter may be taken up and passed at once, but we are so driven for time with the tariff and other bills as to render it exceedingly doubtful." The writing of such an epistle as this by General Butler is simply a piece of audacity. The present session of Congress has been one of the most unfruitful on record. Day after day, week after week, month after month, both houses have indulged in indiscriminate banquets, to the studied neglect of the vital interests of the country. And General Butler himself has been the most dilatory man in the lower house, as far as this particular business of reconstruction is concerned.

The case of Georgia has been hanging fire ever since the Christmas recess. The House devoted weeks to the desultory discussion of a measure looking to the final reconstruction of the State, and the Senate, after considerable delay, undid the whole work, by passing a bill unlike the House bill in its phraseology, although not materially different from it in substance. And then this bill as it came

back to the House from the Senate was left to slumber in the Committee on Reconstruction, of which General Butler is chairman, so long that it seemed to have slept itself to death. Why did not General Butler report the bill back to the House with some sort of a recommendation, and put some measure or other looking to the end of the Georgia business upon its passage, without all this interminable delay? Practically, the fate of Georgia reposes in his hands. On some questions he can be stubborn and dictatorial enough; why has he not displayed a little of his dogmatic spirit on the Georgia question? It is true that the majority in the House has shown its antagonism to the views of Butler, but he waived these views on his own part and voted for the original House bill, after the Bingham proviso, which he had fought against so earnestly, had been attached to it, on the ground that he desired the ratification of the fifteenth amendment, and objected, moreover, to voting with the Democracy on a party issue of any sort. What he could do for the sake of the fifteenth amendment he could surely bring himself to do for the sake of winding up forever the reconstruction business in general and the reconstruction of Georgia in particular.

On the 17th of May the Reconstruction Committee instructed General Butler to report to the House a bill upon which it agreed affecting the status of Georgia. This was a full month after the Senate substitute came over to the House and was referred to the committee, and another full month was suffered to elapse without any effort on the part of the chairman of the committee to get the question again before the House. At last, on Monday, he made a pretence of attempting to report the bill which he had been instructed to report on the 17th of May; and failing to do so, as might have been expected under the circumstances, he yesterday morning, "by a sharp trick," as we are told, persuaded the Committee to reconsider its action and permit him to report the bill without the Bingham proviso, a feature on which both houses of Congress have insisted by decided votes, and after the most careful and protracted discussion. And now, say our Washington despatches, it is probable that he will report the bill without further delay, after having held it back, against the instructions of the committee, for a month, simply for the sake of being permitted to report it in a shape in which it is almost certain to encounter the determined opposition of the majority in both the House and Senate. If General Butler had condescended to bamboozle the Committee on Reconstruction in this fashion at the outset, he would have been entitled to the thanks of the people. But he took his own time, as usual, and meanwhile amused himself by prowling about the country, and endeavoring to introduce into the House a bill for the annexation of San Domingo. This was simply triffing with the people, and no man knew it better than General Butler himself. A little of the energy wasted by him upon his crazy San Domingo scheme would have settled finally and forever the Georgia question nearly two months ago. "I am afraid," he says, "hardness of heart and blindness of mind will possess the people both North and South, until a new calamity will come upon the nation." If General Butler is not careful the country will take him to be just such a calamity as he stands in expectation of, and act accordingly.

GENERAL AMNESTY.

The question of granting a general amnesty to all the participants in the late Rebellion who are now deprived of their political privileges came up again on Monday in the House of Representatives in the shape of a bill introduced by Colonel W. B. Stokes of Tennessee. The House refused to suspend the rules to consider the bill, so the matter may be regarded as settled for the present session. It is very much to be regretted that Congress did not take a proper view of this important question and pass a universal amnesty law, for the work of reconstruction cannot be considered as finished, or the people of the South be made to look upon the Government with friendly eyes, until they are restored to their normal condition of citizenship.

It is too late at this day to talk of punishing participants in the Rebellion, and sound policy demands that since the great work of emancipation has been happily completed by the adoption of the fifteenth amendment, all appearance of persecution of the white people of the South shall be abandoned, and that an effort shall be made to cultivate friendly relations between the people of all sections of the country. So long as a large portion of the Southern people are disfranchised, we can expect nothing but discontent from them; for not only is the deprivation of the rights of citizenship a grievance in itself, but the condition of affairs that grows out of it very seriously retards the prosperity of the late Rebel States, and prevents them from repairing quickly and effectually the ravages made by the war. The passage of an amnesty bill at the present session of Congress would have excused, in some degree at least, our shortcomings; and it is a real misfortune to the country that there was not wisdom enough in either house to understand the importance of such a measure.

The significant feature of the bill brought before the House yesterday was the fact that it was introduced by Stokes, of Tennessee. This man was a virulent secessionist at the breaking out of the Rebellion, but as he did not take any active part in the conflict, he was not deprived of his citizenship, and when the Rebellion collapsed he immediately went into business as an ardent Republican politician, and has particularly distinguished himself by his violence against those who were not as lucky as himself in keeping out of the fight. The introduction of an amnesty bill by Stokes is therefore to be considered merely as a bid for popularity, but that he should seek to obtain a reputation as an advocate for pardon shows very plainly that the

time has arrived when the maintenance of any foothold the Republican party now has in the South depends upon the speedy action of Congress in this matter.

A VOICE FROM THE MINORITY DISTRICTS.

The call for an informal convention of Republican delegates from the minority districts of the State, to meet in this city on the 4th of July, is one of the significant political signs of the times. It is but one of the multitude of palpable indications on every side that the Republican masses have exercised forbearance under incompetent, selfish, and corrupt leadership until forbearance has ceased to be a virtue, and that they have now resolved to act in Pennsylvania as they did in New York, and strike down pretenders regardless of political consequences.

In no part of the State has the Republican party abler and more efficient and deserving representative men than in the minority Congressional districts. They can have no hope of political preferment at home, and they have sustained the principles of the party with unflinching patriotism and fidelity. All they have asked is that they should be heard in dispensing the local patronage of the national administration in their respective districts, so that they should not be utterly ignored in the midst of their unequal conflicts, and their faithful followers be compelled to stand aside and see characterless and incompetent partisans of some outside scheming politician fill the local places of honor and profit.

When Grant's administration commenced, the Pennsylvania delegation in Congress wrangled over the patronage in a most disgraceful manner. The schemes and counter schemes of pretended leaders to gain personal advantages made the State a byword in Washington, and gave the President the best possible opportunity to ignore our great Commonwealth in making up his administration. The ablest and most efficient Republicans went to Washington to advise as to appointments, only to be coldly turned away with the insulting information that their districts belonged to the Senators. In every minority district the leading Republicans have been almost universally ignored in the petty huckstering of our delegation, and it has been borne until it can be borne no longer. The local complaints have taken deep root all over the State, and the logical result of this great wrong appears in an informal convention of independent and consistent Republicans, who will no longer submit to the course that has been pursued towards them. The national leaders of the Republican party will do well to give timely heed to these complaints.

SPECIAL NOTICES.

For additional Special Notices see the Inside Pages. THIN CLOTHES! DRAP D'ETE, LINEN, DUCK, ALPACA, MOHAIR, SERGES, SEER SUCKERS, INDIA SILK, BATTISTE, DIAGONALS, CRAPES, FLANNELS, TWEEDS.

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The vote to adopt or reject the finding of the referees will be taken at this meeting, and it is desired that every stockholder be present. HENRY BUMM, Chairman.

THE ANNIVERSARY OF THE "OLD MAN'S HOME" will be celebrated on THURSDAY, 16th inst., at 4 P. M., at the "HOME," THIRTY-NINTH and POWELTON AVENUE (Arch Street). Addresses may be expected from Dr. BRADLE, Rev. C. DANA BOARDMAN, and other eminent speakers. 613 31.

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